

Statement by the
Honorable Peter Hoekstra,
Ranking Member,
at the Hearing on World-wide Threats

18 January, 2007

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and thank you for holding our first hearing of the 110th Congress – a hearing to discuss the threats we and our allies face across the globe.

I too wish to welcome everyone, particularly our witnesses, to a hearing that has historically given us the backdrop for all that we do as an oversight committee, and as we move forward to provide the resources and authorities for our Intelligence Community as they conduct their activities to safeguard us all.

As you noted Mr. Chairman, we welcome the Director of National Intelligence, Ambassador Negroponte, back for what appears to be his last formal appearance in front of this committee before his confirmation hearing as Deputy Secretary of State. Certainly congratulations are in order for this nomination, and we wish you well in this new capacity. That certainly does not diminish the disappointment that many of us have in losing you so early in your tenure as the nation's first Director of National Intelligence. Some of us have a great deal of blood, sweat, and tears invested in the creation of the DNI, and we remain committed to its success. Despite bumps in the road, you have brought the Office of the DNI from a creation on paper to a functioning reality. And although there is a great deal of work yet to be done, you have made a major difference and improved greatly the coordination and cooperation of the disparate elements of the U.S. Intelligence Community – making it more effective and better postured for the future needs of the nation. Your personal efforts had made a positive mark on the community that will be felt for decades. For

that, we all owe you a great debt of gratitude. For all Americans, I thank you.

I wish to welcome also the distinguished members of the Intelligence Community, General Hayden, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency; Charlie Allen the Director of Intelligence for the Department of Homeland Security; Phillip Mudd, the Associate Executive Assistant Director of the National Security Bureau of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Lieutenant General Mike Maples, the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency. This group represents the vast majority of the analytic capability of our Intelligence Community and we look forward to your testimony today.

Each year this committee receives at the beginning of the congressional session an updated, comprehensive world wide threats assessment from the intelligence community. It is appropriate that we begin each new congressional session this way.

In addition to the yearly assessment, over the past years, this committee has also received classified hot spots briefings from the intelligence community, generally on a bi-weekly basis. Such briefings were aimed at ensuring the committee had up-to-date information on the world wide threats to our national security. I mention this to accentuate that the majority of this committee's membership is well aware of the numerous threats to US national security from across the globe.

For the past two years, this Committee has focused its oversight efforts to properly authorize and resource the Intelligence Community using a structured, architectural view and approach. First, we strove to understand the threats to the nation – clearly the goal of today's hearing. This threat-based backdrop has, and is expected today to, provide us the opportunity to understand better the wide-range of nation state and non-nation state threats to America. With such an understanding, we can more objectively

review the Intelligence Community's ability – or lack thereof – to respond and provide knowledge about these threats to our policy makers and, where necessary, to our military personnel in the field. Armed then with proper metrics, we can then determine the most critical needs for resources, authorities and capabilities, allowing us to better determine the necessary tradeoffs between our technical intelligence, human intelligence, analytic and production capabilities. Ultimately, we have attempted to apply the proper funding to those critical needs. I maintain that that approach is the best way for us conduct our oversight responsibilities and for us to provide the proper funding levels to our various intelligence agencies and functions so that they can continue to defend the nation. So I look forward to this presentation today.

Finally, as I previewed the Director's written unclassified statement for the record, I note that the threats are diverse. The threats are not simply those of radical militant Islamic terrorism which continues to gain so much of our collective attention. These

threats include nation states – such as China and a resurging Russia - that have never ceased to pose vexing problems to America, its allies, and its interests around the world. They include emerging regional coalitions apparently unfriendly to the United States in nearby places such as South and Central America. They include transnational threats of drug and human smuggling cartels. They include the weapons of mass destruction proliferators and emerging nuclear threat actors such as North Korea and Iran. All of these are potential threats that we must keep our Intelligence Community's collective eye on. In many of our oversight travels, we hear of the intelligence efforts being nearly singly focused on the threat of terrorism and we hear that some of these other pressing issues are not receiving the emphasis that is likely necessary. We must ensure that our Community is properly postured and properly resourced to be the "Sherwin Williams Paint Company" that covers the entire world with capability.

We owe our Intelligence Community a great deal of gratitude. Despite the negative press that often goes with defending our nation, the Members here know the hard work, the dedication, and the sacrifices our Intelligence Community professional around the world. We thank you all, and I thank you for your testimony here today.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.